



NEWS

From County Supervisor Paul Biane
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First Five Commission Chairman Paul Biane Endorses Screening, Assessment, Referrals and Treatment Program

San Bernardino - As part of its goals to increase the number of healthy, natural births in San Bernardino County, the First Five San Bernardino is participating in a countywide screening, assessment, referrals and treatment (SART) program for women and children. The SART program is a multi-disciplinary collaborative promoting the implementation of proven research based strategies for prevention, intervention and clinical treatment services minimizing the negative impact to children resulting from their mother's substance abuse during pregnancy.

Supervisor Paul Biane, who is chairman of the First Five Commission, strongly

endorses this program as a potential breakthrough in the effort to decrease the number of drug pregnancies and the implementation of a comprehensive plan for assessment and treatment for children in San Bernardino County.

“During my chairmanship of this vital commission, I have pledged to address longstanding problems directly,” said Chairman Biane. “This is a crucial step in the right direction.”

The SART Program is two-fold: it addresses pregnant women and children. Medical providers throughout San Bernardino County will utilize a screening process to assess pregnant women for drug, alcohol, and tobacco use during pregnancy, followed by referral to appropriate treatment programs resulting in more babies being born drug free. The second part of the SART program addresses the needs of children born to mothers who abused drugs and or alcohol during their pregnancy. Implementation of this component will incorporate children through age five, beginning with those at risk due to mental, behavioral, developmental, social and emotional problems. Referrals will be made to a Children’s Assessment Center where by appropriate treatment will be offered as determined and prescribed by a transdisciplinary assessment team.

“While it is important to help women who abuse drugs or alcohol early in their pregnancies, it is equally important to help the children whose mothers did not, or were not able to, seek such help,” continued Chairman Biane. “We must address their medical and mental health before it is too late.”

On March 2, 2005, noted pediatrician Ira Chasnoff will deliver a presentation to the commission and the public on the details of this program. All are welcome to attend. The First Five Commission meeting will be held on March 2nd at 3:30 pm, at the San Bernardino County Government Center located at 385 North Arrowhead, in the Board Chambers. Dr. Chasnoff has addressed the commission throughout its process of planning and implementing aspects of the SART Program.

“I eagerly await his presentation,” concluded Chairman Biane.

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